

10-1-2012

## Iowa State Daily (GridIron 09-31-2012)

Iowa State Daily

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# GRIDIRON

Saturday, September 1, 2012 >> Iowa State vs. University of Tulsa >> Kickoff at 2:30 p.m. Saturday >> an Iowa State Daily sports supplement

## Two anchors

*Knott, Klein use differing styles  
to create 'levelheaded' synergy*





## Linebackers

# Knott, Klein give anchor to defense

*'Levelheaded' seniors use differing styles to create synergy*

By Jake Calhoun  
@iowastatedaily.com

Jake Knott and A.J. Klein have seen it all.

Entering this season as true seniors, the linebackers have accounted for almost 25 percent of the team's tackles and will be leading the team into its season-opening game against Tulsa on Saturday.

Knott and Klein garnered national attention this offseason, landing spots on the preseason All-Big 12 team as well as watch lists for the Rotary Lombardi Award (best linebacker/lineman resembling late coach Vince Lombardi), Butkus Award (best linebacker), and the Bednarik (best defensive player) and Nagurski (best defensive player) Awards.

"They're deserving of the attention they're getting," said coach Paul Rhoads during the team's Aug. 2 media day. "I also believe they're level-headed and mature enough that they can handle that and can go out and play and win football games for us."

Rhoads said the differing styles of how Knott and Klein play as linebackers create the synergy as well as make it difficult for opponents to figure out blocking schemes for them.

Leadership on the field is also a major contribution Knott and Klein make to the team, thanks in part to the coaching of defensive coordinator Wally Burnham, who has developed them into the players they are now.

"They go out there and lead, and they do their job, and they give a lot of effort," Burnham said last season. "They're intelligent football players, and that carries them a long way."

Entering this season as two-year starters at weak-side and middle linebacker has boded well for Knott and Klein, having given them the necessary experience to know what to do in critical situations as well as quarterback the defense.



File photo: Iowa State Daily

Iowa State played Missouri on Oct. 15, 2011, at Faurot Field in Columbia, Mo. The Cyclones trailed the Tigers 31-10 at halftime, with the only ISU scores coming on a first quarter goal and a second quarter interception return by No. 47 linebacker A.J. Klein.

## A.J. Klein



- Height: 6-foot-2
- Weight: 248 pounds
- Hometown: Kimberly, Wis. (Kimberly)
- 244 career tackles in three seasons at Iowa State (87 away from 10th all-time)
- 16.5 career tackles for loss
- Four career interceptions
- Three interceptions returned for touchdowns (Most in school history)
- Recorded longest play from scrimmage in school history with a 78-yard interception returned for a touchdown against Missouri on Oct. 15, 2011
- 2011 Big 12 Co-Defensive Player of the Year
- 2011 First-team All-Big 12 (coaches), 2011 Second-team All-Big 12 (AP), 2010 All-Big 12 Honorable Mention






## Jake Knott



- Height: 6-foot-3
- Weight: 252 pounds
- Hometown: Waukee, Iowa (Waukee)
- 268 career tackles in three seasons at Iowa State (63 away from 10th all-time)
- 14 career games with double figures in tackles
- Posted career-high 18 tackles against Baylor on Oct. 8, 2011
- Six career interceptions
- Eight career forced fumbles
- 2011 Sports Illustrated All-American Honorable Mention
- 2011 First-team All-Big 12, 2010 Second-team All-Big 12



# GRIDIRONPICKS

	Tulsa vs. Iowa State	No. 24 Boise State vs. No. 13 Michigan State	Notre Dame vs. Navy (in Dublin, Ireland)	Northern Iowa vs. No. 12 Wisconsin	Iowa vs. Northern Illinois (in Chicago)	No. 8 Michigan vs. No. 2 Alabama (in Dallas)	Northwestern vs. Syracuse
Jake Calhoun, sports editor (0-0) 	Iowa State — You have no idea how many pee jokes I want to make about the Golden Hurricane but can't.	Michigan State — No Kellen Moore? No problem... for Michigan State.	Notre Dame — The Fighting Irish are fighting in Ireland. I wish I actually had a joke that didn't involve gingers for this one.	Wisconsin — Northern Iowa will find that Camp Randall drunks are much meaner to visiting teams than Kinnick drunks.	Northern Illinois — James Vandenberg will throw three interceptions and then break his leg. Plus I need an upset.	Alabama — Nick Saban is evil, but he gets things done. Roll Tide.	Syracuse — The Orange are hoping they can get another unsportsmanlike salute to help them out here.
Dean Berhow-Goll, assistant sports editor (0-0) 	Iowa State — I'll take Iowa State, but Tulsa has four DBs who have combined 78 starts and 22 INTs. Could be trouble for Jantz.	Michigan State — The Spartans will surprise a lot of the Big Ten this year with a monster returning defense. I'll take Sparty.	Notre Dame — Over/under the amount of beer consumed in Ireland that day? Whatever it is, I'll take the over.	Wisconsin — Well, unless Northern Iowa signed the guys who assaulted Montee Ball, they're in trouble.	Iowa — Whoever the running back is for Iowa, he's much better than anyone Northern Illinois has.	Alabama — Too much Tide. Don't count out Shoelace though. He could be this year's Cam Newton.	Northwestern — I'll almost always take Big Ten football over Big East football. 'Cuse should stick to basketball.
Alex Halsted, assistant sports editor (0-0) 	Iowa State — A storm is coming to Jack Trice Stadium, but the Golden Hurricane will find no land against the Cyclones.	Boise State — This will be the Broncos' big game in 2012. Despite being away from their blue turf, they will pull off the upset.	Notre Dame — Notre Dame playing in Ireland? They can't possibly lose that one, right?	Wisconsin — UNI nearly upset Iowa in 2009, but Wisconsin's high-scoring offense will be too much for a similar game.	Iowa — NIU will put up a strong fight at Soldier Field, but Iowa's defense will help overcome its running back uncertainty.	Alabama — Only need three words for this one: Roll damn tide.	Syracuse — Syracuse gets this purely based on its awesome mascot.
Stephen Koengisfeld, sports online editor (0-0) 	Iowa State — The last time the Cyclones were in Jack Trice, they toppled the BCS. They'll want to bring back that momentum.	Michigan State — Both teams are coming in with new quarterbacks. No upset in this one, however.	Notre Dame — Rudy isn't going to make the trip to Dublin for this one, but this is Notre Dame's backyard.	Wisconsin — With a team that put up more than 45 points in nine games last season, the Badgers beat the Panthers in this one.	Iowa — The Hawkeyes are coming into the season with something to prove even if they don't have a running back.	Alabama — Fluker's size-22 shoes are going to stomp the defending Sugar Bowl champs.	Northwestern — If Northwestern doesn't win here, good luck competing with the Big Ten this year.
Katherine Klingseis, ISD editor-in-chief 	Iowa State — It would be pretty lame if I said: "I picked Iowa State because I go to Iowa State." Well, it's true. Oops.	Boise State — I love blue. Boise State has blue turf on its football field. Yes, I made this decision based on turf color.	Notre Dame — I've got some Irish blood in me. I've never been in a fight, however.	Wisconsin — I hear Wisconsin has good cheese and beer. That has nothing to do with football.	Northern Illinois — I just wanted to copy Calhoun to see if it would annoy him.	Alabama — First is the worst. Second is the best. Third is the one with a treasure chest. Eighth is Michigan... or something.	Northwestern — As far as cardinal directions go, north and west are my favorite.

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## QUICK FACTS: TULSA

### Bill Blankenship: head coach

- **Experience:** Second year (8-5)
- **Bowl record:** 0-1
- **Hometown:** Spiro, Okla.
- **College:** Tulsa (1979)
- **Graduate Degree:** Northeastern State (1985)
- **Family:** wife Angie; sons Josh, Caleb and Adam.
- Blankenship inherited a Tulsa team that had been to six bowl games in eight years, managing to meet the team's high expectations with an 8-5 record and 7-1 conference mark. Four of the team's five losses in his first season as coach came against top-10 teams — No. 1 Oklahoma, No. 7 Oklahoma State, No. 4 Boise State, No. 7 Houston.



Photo courtesy of Tulsa Communications

- Blankenship served as an assistant coach for Todd Graham, who left the head-coaching job at Tulsa for the same position at Pittsburgh, for four seasons at Tulsa. His coaching duties as an assistant included wide receivers coach in 2007, special teams coordinator in 2008 and running backs coach from 2009 to 2010.

- However, Blankenship's ties to Tulsa date back to his time as a student-athlete, when he was the starting quarterback for the Golden Hurricane in the mid-to-late 1970s. In his time as a three-year letterwinning signal caller for the Golden Hurricane, Blankenship threw for two,113 yards and eight touchdowns.
- He has three sons who played college football. His oldest son, Josh, played quarterback at Tulsa and Eastern Washington. Caleb played tight end at Tulsa, and his youngest, Adam, played at Illinois State and now coaches defensive ends at Tulsa.

- **Location:** Tulsa, Okla.
- **Type:** Private Presbyterian
- **Founded:** 1894
- **Enrollment:** 4,165
- **Student-to-faculty ratio:** 14-to-1
- **Nickname:** Golden Hurricane (not Golden Hurricanes)
- **Mascot:** Captain Cane (Masked superhero with lightning bolt)
- The Golden Hurricane play in Skelly Field at H.A. Chapman Stadium, which seats 30,000.
- Tulsa is one of three FBS schools in Oklahoma (Oklahoma, Oklahoma State) but is the only one that is private.
- Famous alumni include TV personality and psychologist Phil McGraw (AKA Dr. Phil), NFL Hall-of-Fame receiver Steve Largent



and late syndicated radio personality Paul Harvey.

- Tulsa has been a member of Conference USA since 2005. Before then, it was a member of the Western Athletic Conference from 1996-2004 and was a member of the Missouri Valley Conference from 1935-96. From 1985-96, Tulsa football competed as an independent since the Missouri Valley dropped football in 1985.
- Tulsa has made it to a bowl game in seven of its last nine seasons (4-3). Of

those seven bowl games, Tulsa is 0-2 against current BCS schools (Lost to Georgia Tech in 2003 Humanitarian Bowl, lost to Utah in 2006 Armed Forces Bowl).

- In the past four years, Tulsa is 1-4 on the road against BCS schools. Its lone win came against Notre Dame 28-27 in 2010.
- Tulsa's all-time record in football is 560-438-27 (.560).
- Tulsa's closest opponent in Conference USA is Southern Methodist (Dallas), which is 255 miles away. Once SMU moves to the Big East next season, Tulsa's closest conference opponent will be new addition North Texas (Denton, Texas), which will be 270 miles away.

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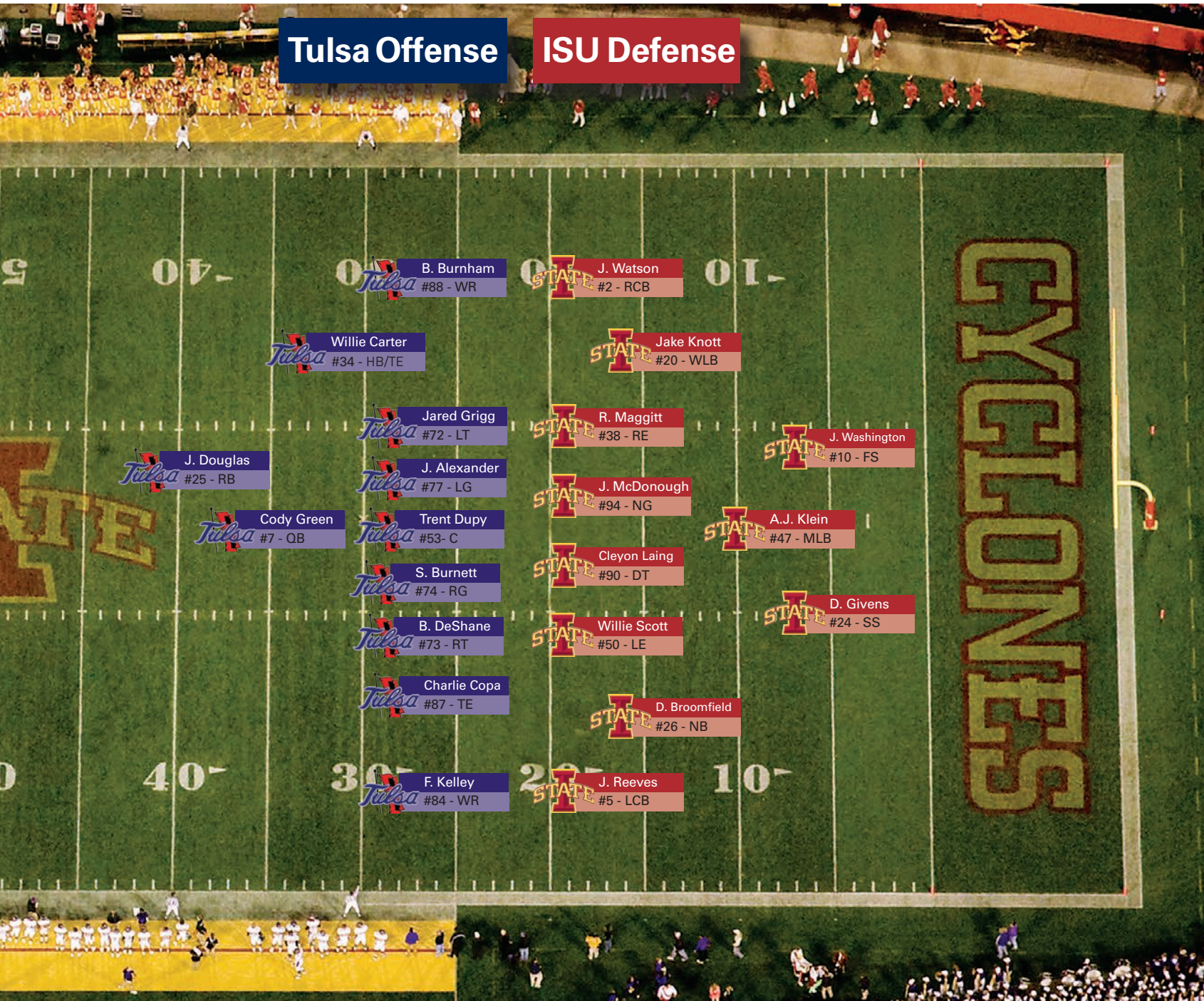
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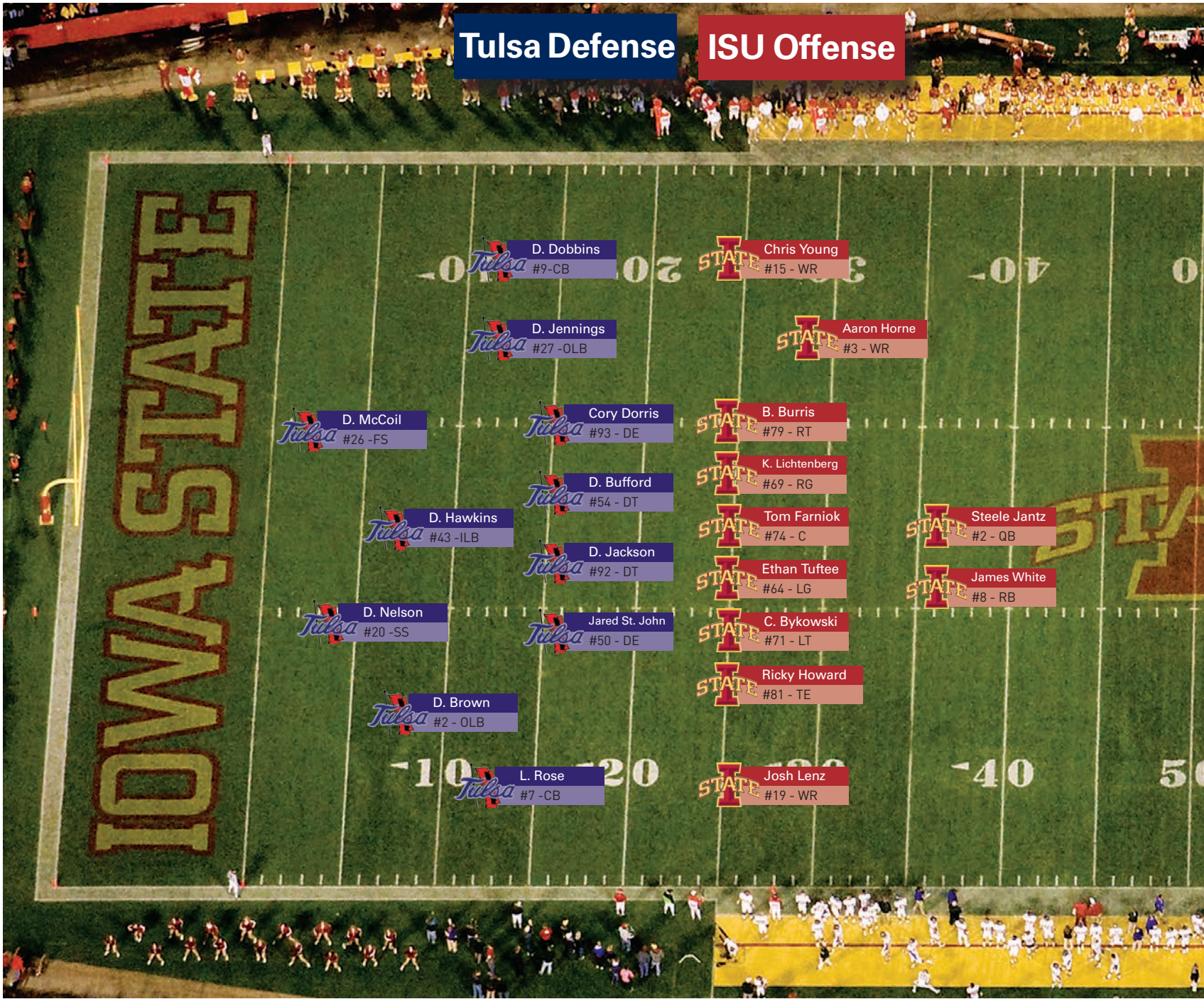


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## Editorial

# Cyclones could go 6-6 in regular season play

With much anticipation for the ISU football team's 2012 season, coach Paul Rhoads has a tough task ahead of him: Keep consistency.

The Cyclones shocked the nation last season with their upset of No. 2 Oklahoma State but floundered to a 6-7 finish with three straight losses — including a loss to Rutgers in the Pinstripe Bowl — following their biggest upset in school history.

Akin to what we did last year, the ISD Sports Editorial Board has chosen to break down Iowa State's schedule week-by-week and give a brief explanation of our picks.



File photo: Iowa State Daily

Iowa State won 20-19 last year against the Northern Iowa Panthers, adding to their eventual season record of 6-7. The ISD Sports Editorial Board predicts the Cyclones will finish this year at 6-6 in regular season play.

### Sept. 1 vs. Tulsa

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** Tulsa is a team that went 8-5 last season with four of its five losses coming to ranked opponents, but will it be able to handle a raucous Jack Trice Stadium with hopes of defeating a Big 12 team for the first time since 1998? It will be close, but the Cyclones will win in a squeaker.

### Sept. 8 at Iowa

**Winner:** Iowa

**Why?** Last year's triple-overtime upset of Iowa won the Cyclones succulent bragging rights, but winning in Kinnick Stadium for a second straight victory in the Cy-Hawk Series may be a little bit of a stretch. With Iowa fixing to have a down year, we predict a close matchup.

### Sept. 15 vs. Western Illinois

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** While the first two games

will be tough, Iowa State will get a reprieve in its schedule with Western Illinois, which has won just 11 games in the past three seasons (.306).

### Sept. 29 vs. Texas Tech

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** While a Big 12 opponent from the Lone Star State always looks tough on the Cyclones' schedule, Rhoads has Tech's number having won the last two matchups. Tech figures to have another season with struggles, which makes an ISU team emerging from a bye week favorable.

### Oct. 6 at TCU

**Winner:** TCU

**Why?** This will be the Cyclones' first game against TCU as a conference opponent. TCU is 12-3 against BCS schools since 2005, so its move

to the Big 12 won't put it at a disadvantage in competitiveness. The Cyclones will put up a fight, but won't get an upset here.

### Oct. 13 vs. Kansas State

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** K-State has won four straight in "Farmageddon," but the last time the Wildcats played in Ames (2007), it was Iowa State that was victorious. Kansas State will have another good team this year led by scrambling quarterback Collin Klein, but Iowa State will manage to stop the run at least in this game.

### Oct. 20 at Oklahoma State

**Winner:** Oklahoma State

**Why?** Yes, the fairytale upset of No. 2 Oklahoma State was quite the thriller, but let's be real. Of

the Cyclones' major upsets — vs. Nebraska (2009), at Texas (2010) — in Rhoads first two years, they went on to get beat by that team the next season. Look for that trend to continue as the Cowboys roll.

### Oct. 27 vs. Baylor

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** Word is that Baylor will have a good team following the early departure of Heisman quarterback Robert Griffin III to the NFL, but Iowa State will be playing with a chip on its shoulder following a loss to Oklahoma State.

Trying to avoid losing two straight homecoming games for the first time since the 2007-08 seasons, the Cyclones win here.

### Nov. 3 vs. Oklahoma

**Winner:** Oklahoma

**Why?** Losing 13 straight to the Sooners doesn't make the Cyclones look like having much of a chance in this one. Yes, the game is in Jack Trice Stadium, but Oklahoma has only lost nine road games in the past five seasons. Easy pick, Sooners in a blowout.

### Nov. 10 at Texas

**Winner:** Texas

**Why?** The Longhorns have since forgotten about their first-ever loss to the Cyclones in 2010. Texas stomped Iowa State last season in the second-highest-attended home game in school history. Since the Cyclones will be dog-tired by this point in the season, look for another Longhorn victory.

### Nov. 17 at Kansas

**Winner:** Iowa State

**Why?** Charlie Weis' claiming of power for KU football may take a couple years to pay dividends. Iowa State is 2-1 against the Jayhawks in the Rhoads era but hasn't won in Lawrence, Kan., since 2001. A battered ISU team can be counted on to end that streak to ensure bowl eligibility for the second straight season.

### Nov. 23 vs. West Virginia

**Winner:** West Virginia

**Why?** Black Friday will be the perfect setting for the first-ever matchup between these two. The Mountaineers will most likely be in contention for a BCS game at this point, but something tells us the Cyclones won't lay down easily to their new conference foe. West Virginia wins in a closer-than-you-think contest.

There you have it, our predictions have the Cyclones going 6-6 and 4-5 in conference play — two wins more than last year's prediction of a 4-8 season with a 2-7 conference record.

We were wrong about last year, so who knows? Maybe we're wrong this year too. But let's wait to see what happens.

### ISD Sports Editorial Board

**Jake Calhoun**, sports editor  
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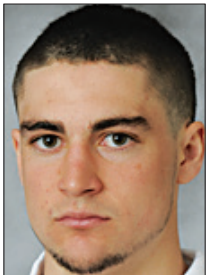
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Players to watch: Iowa State

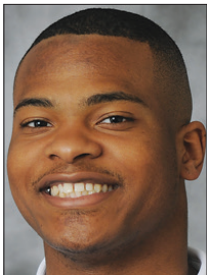
QB 2 Steele Jantz

Senior, 6’3”, 225 pounds  
Passing: 25-37 comp., 279 yards, 4 TD, 11 INT  
Rushing: 84 att., 216 net yards, 2.6 avg, 2 TD



DB 10 Jacques Washington

Redshirt junior, 6’1”, 208 pounds  
2011: 90 total tackles (62 solo, 28 ast)  
1.0 TFL - 10 yards lost, 1 FF, 1 fumb. rec



Players to watch: Tulsa

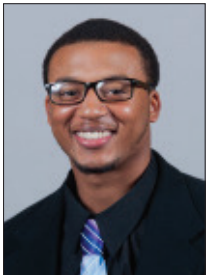
HB 34 Willie Carter

Freshman, 6’2”, 231 pounds  
Receiving: 61 rec., 868 net yards, 14.2 avg, 7 TD  
Rushing: 13 att., 62 net yards, 4.8avg, 2 TD



DB 26 Dexter McCoil

Senior, 6’4”, 222 pounds  
2011: 84 total tackles (48 solo, 36 ast),  
3.0 TFL - 5 yards lost, 6 int. - 131 yards





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## >>LINEBACKER.p2

"It's just so easy and almost [to the point where] we don't even need to say a word while we're out there because we both know what the other one's going to do," Knott said. "That goes a long way in being able to play faster, quicker and more explosive."

Aside from the physical benefits, Klein said experience has also provided mental benefits for the linebacking tandem as well.

"The more experienced you are, the slower the game is for you, the faster you can react and the more plays you can make," Klein said. "For me and Jake over the past three years being together, the game has slowed down for us. That's why we've been mostly successful on game day as far as being in the right positions."

A 2009 graduate of Waukee High School in Waukee, Knott did not get a lot of attention from Division I football programs, despite being recruited by Iowa for baseball.

"It really built my work ethic and maybe put a chip on my shoulder," Knott said of the lack of attention he

got out of high school. "A.J. has been the same way, and we both just go out there every single day and try to be consistent and work hard."

Off the field, Knott and Klein can be found playing video games, tweeting inside jokes to one another on Twitter or taking up a round of golf.

Golf has been a staple in Knott and Klein's off-the-field contests, providing another avenue to beat each other and keep competitive spirits alive.

"I think it's my favorite game just because it's so challenging; it's fun to watch," Klein said. "I had the opportunity to play in the Principal Charity Classic, and watching the pros up close, [it] is just ridiculous how good they are at the game."

While golf may be a competitive affair during the offseason, football comes first.

"They're great friends ... and they know they have the ability to play at a high level so they challenge each other in practice and off the field to accomplish that," Rhoads said. "They're strong in the weight room; they're smart in the classroom; they're fast and physical on the football field."



File photo: Iowa State Daily

Linebacker Jake Knott, along with defensive end Rony Nelson, take down Texas A&M's quarterback Ryan Tannehill. Knott had a total of three tackles throughout the game and the Cyclones fell to the Aggies with a score of 33-17.

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## Style

# Tailgate in cardinal and gold fashion

## Dress to impress on game day

By Catherine Calistro  
ISD Style writer

Iowa State's football season is quickly approaching, ensuring another opportunity to dress to impress. Just because it's a sporting event doesn't mean you have to throw your own style out the window.

There are numerous ways to incorporate cardinal and gold into your game day ensemble with options ranging from head-to-toe.

First things first, do us all a favor and lose the lanyards. As a piece of friendly advice from

an upperclassman, lanyards just draw attention to that fact you're at the bottom of the college totem pole.

Along with lanyards, leave the purses at home. Being tied down by baggage is the last thing you'll want on game day.

Ideally, bring only the essentials — debit card, ticket, student ID and license — which are most likely able to all fit in your back pocket. If you find it necessary to bring a bag of some sort, a clutch or cross-body purse would be perfect for tailgating and games.

Another way to add a little style to your tailgating attire would be to spruce up any ISU gear by doing a little 'reconstructing' by finding a

cute way to change up a boring T-shirt into a unique DIY project perfect for game day. A little snipping and sewing and some ribbon will turn any T-shirt into the perfect outfit that will be sure to make you stand out.

As the temperature drops, the options for Cyclone gear are not as plentiful as those early season games, but there are definitely still opportunities to support your team while still looking stylish on those cooler fall games.

A great way to keep warm and still cheer on those cyclones is to sport a cardinal and gold scarf or cute stocking hat. Just because the temperatures are a bit chillier definitely does

not mean you need to sacrifice your style.

To add even more glitz and glam to your spirited outfit, a cardinal and/or gold headband would be a perfect finishing touch. Hobby Lobby, Jo-Ann Fabrics and University Book Store all offer some great hair accessories, ranging from sequined elastic headpieces to multi-colored braided headbands.

You really can't go wrong with how you choose to spice up your ISU gear. Incorporating a little of your own style and flare into your outfit on game day will only make you look like more of a super fan and even get you a couple of double takes.



File: Iowa State Daily

Students make a flash mob on Sept. 11, 2011, before the Iowa - Iowa State football game. There are many ways wear your cardinal and gold spirit on your sleeve when tailgating.

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